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Main decisions and policy recommendations of the Committee on World Food Security

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit a report on the main decisions and policy recommendations of the Committee on World Food Security.

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Report on the main decisions and policy recommendations of the Committee on World Food Security

Introduction

1. The present report responds to Economic and Social Council decision 2011/217, in which the Council invited the Chair of the Committee on World Food Security to transmit to the Council every year, a report on the main decisions and policy recommendations made and the results achieved by the Committee in the area of food security and nutrition, in accordance with its roles and vision. More information regarding the roles and vision of the Committee can be found in documents A/66/76-E/2011/102 and A/65/73-E/2010/51. This report describes the main outcomes of, and decisions taken by the Committee at, its forty-third session, held in October 2016, and, where relevant, provides updates on follow-up action. The final report of the forty-third session is available at http://www.fao.org/3/a-ms023e.pdf. The forty-fourth session of the Committee will be held from 9 to 13 October 2017.

Main decisions, recommendations and results

Connecting smallholders to markets

2. The policy recommendations on connecting smallholders to markets, which were endorsed at the forty-third session of the Committee, are based on existing evidence and aim at encouraging good policies and practices. They recognize that Governments have an essential role to play in addressing smallholders' specific constraints and maximizing the potential for beneficial access to reliable and remunerative markets. The recommendations, if implemented, are expected to play a decisive role in ensuring that smallholders can continue to contribute to global food production and their own food security and in supporting efforts by Governments to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1).

3. These recommendations:

- Recognize the importance of local and domestic food markets for smallholders and the need to strengthen data-collection systems with regard to these types of markets to better inform public policies
- Highlight the potential role that smallholders can play in international markets, and the financial and capacity-building opportunities as well as the challenges within the context of the standards to be met and the conditions to be faced
- Stress the importance of smallholders in creating stronger linkages between consumers and the source of food production
- Recognize the need for initiatives that address the constraints faced by women and youth, by promoting opportunities and facilitating their access to resources

4. The Committee encourages all stakeholders to disseminate, make use of and support the application of these recommendations when formulating strategies, policies and programmes designed to strengthen the linkages between smallholders and markets.

5. The Committee requests the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, to consider, endorse and ensure the wide dissemination of these recommendations to all relevant United Nations organizations and agencies.

Sustainable agricultural development for food security and nutrition: what are the roles for livestock?

6. In 2016, the Committee's High-level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition presented a report entitled "Sustainable agricultural development for food security and nutrition: what roles for livestock?". The report served as the basis for a policy discussion which led to the elaboration of policy recommendations. Those recommendations, which were endorsed by the Committee at its plenary session, are contained in the final report of the forty-third session of the Committee.

7. The aim of the recommendations is to strengthen the contribution of the livestock sector to sustainable agricultural development for food security and nutrition and to contribute to the progressive realization of the right to adequate food, within the overall context of achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, while recognizing the essential role of smallholders in achieving food security and nutrition.

8. The Committee recommended policies and actions that would:

- Foster policy coherence for food security and nutrition
- Address nutrition, food safety, working conditions and services
- Foster gender equality and women's empowerment
- Also foster empowerment of youth
- Protect the environment and promote sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources
- Enhance resilience against risks and variability
- Promote cooperation and collaboration in innovation, research and development, and address data needs
- Improve animal health and welfare
- Recognize, protect and support pastoral systems for livelihoods and sustainable resource management
- Promote and support sustainable grazing systems
- Also promote and support mixed systems
- Further promote the sustainability of intensive systems

9. The Committee encourages all stakeholders to disseminate the recommendations at the local, national and global levels, and make use of and

support their application when formulating strategies, policies and programmes, as appropriate.

The engagement of the Committee in advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

10. The Committee agreed upon a strategy focused on how the Committee will support country-led implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and national achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The strategy envisages that the Committee will carry out its roles along the axes of three main functions: policy convergence, lessons-sharing and the global review of progress.

11. It has also decided that the Committee will support global reviews of progress by providing regular, timely and agreed inputs to the high-level political forum on sustainable development in New York, and advocate for food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture to be adequately addressed in the high-level political guidance resulting from the forum.

12. The Committee encouraged its stakeholders to actively engage with the General Assembly and its subsidiary bodies, to communicate and disseminate Committee decisions in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals, and to enhance collaboration with other global and regional bodies, such as the regional forums on sustainable development, involved in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda.

Engagement of the Committee in advancing nutrition

13. A framework was endorsed by the Committee to enable it to step up its contribution to the global fight against malnutrition in all its forms. The framework identifies opportunities arising from the Rome Declaration on Nutrition[1] and the Framework for Action[2] adopted at the Second International Conference on Nutrition, and the relevant Sustainable Development Goals, and provides a clear vision of the Committee's role as related to nutrition together with a workplan leading to concrete outcomes for 2017 and beyond. In 2017, the Committee's contribution to the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (see General Assembly resolution 70/259) will be determined, and preparation for future work on policy convergence will be undertaken with a view to building a common understanding of the main issues among Committee stakeholders.

Monitoring the implementation of the Committee's decisions and recommendations

14. The Committee endorsed terms of reference that provide guidance to stakeholders at global, regional and national levels on the sharing of experiences and good practices in implementing the Committee's decisions and recommendations.

15. A global thematic event was held at the plenary session to enable the sharing of experiences and a taking stock of the use and application of the Committee's

[1] World Health Organization, document EB 136/8, annex I.
[2] World Health Organization, document EB 136/8, annex II.

Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security,[3] four years after their endorsement. The event demonstrated that the Voluntary Guidelines had been utilized and applied in many countries. Further, a number of good practices emerged from the discussion which highlighted, inter alia, the importance of empowering and enabling all stakeholders to engage in securing tenure rights, promoting inclusive multi-stakeholder platforms and strong political commitment, mainstreaming the Voluntary Guidelines in national policies and laws, and the sharing of experiences within and across countries so as to consolidate expertise and develop capacities. Challenges identified included the difficulty in ensuring the effective representation of the main beneficiaries in multi-stakeholder dialogue and the violence perpetrated against human rights defenders engaged in securing landownership.

Urbanization, rural transformation and implications for food Security and nutrition

16. A forum on "Urbanization, rural transformation and implications for food security and nutrition" was held during the forty-third session of the Committee to facilitate the exchange of views and practical experience on the challenges, opportunities and positive outcomes witnessed by all stakeholders as a result of more integrated rural/urban approaches.

17. The Committee recognized the importance of understanding the major trends in, and drivers of, the changing rural/urban dynamics and their implications for food security and nutrition. Areas for policy attention discussed included food access, lack of diverse diets, consumption patterns and nutrition, poverty, youth, migration, marginalization of vulnerable groups, gender equality and women's empowerment, innovation, integrated and holistic approaches, data collection and analysis, climate change, land and natural resources, and lack of infrastructure and services.

18. In 2017, the Committee will compile experiences and effective policy approaches to addressing food security and nutrition within the context of changing rural/urban dynamics, taking into account the outcomes of both the forum and the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III).

Forthcoming work of the High-level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition

19. In 2017, the High-level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition will present two reports, one on sustainable forestry for food security and nutrition and the other on nutrition and food systems. These reports will provide the evidence base needed to inform the Committee's future policy convergence work.

Multi-year programme of work

20. The Committee, as part of the elaboration of the multi-year programme of work for the next biennium, requested the High-level Panel of Experts to issue, by

[3] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, document CL 144/9 (C 2013/20), appendix D.

the end of 2017, a note on critical and emerging issues for food security and nutrition to inform the future work of the Committee; and in 2018, a report on multi-stakeholder partnerships to finance and improve food security and nutrition in the framework of the 2030 Agenda.

21. An additional criterion for the selection of future Committee activities was adopted, one that focuses on the contribution and relevance of the suggested activity to specific aspects of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition

22. The Committee endorsed the fifth version of the Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition, which includes the policy recommendations on water for food security and nutrition that had been endorsed at the forty-second session of the Committee in 2015, and the Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises.

Evaluation of the Committee's Effectiveness

23. The Committee was updated on the progress of the ongoing independent evaluation of the Committee. Following its conclusion in March 2017, a plan of action will be developed to address the recommendations resulting from the evaluation.

Report of the forty-third session of the Committee on World Food Security (Rome, 17-21 October 2016)

24. The full final report of the forty-third session of the Committee on World Food Security, which was held in Rome at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations from 17 to 21 October 2016, can, as noted above, be found at the following link: http://www.fao.org/3/a-ms023e.pdf. The report includes the agenda of the session (appendix A); the membership of the Committee (appendix B); the list of documents (appendix C); the declaration of the Russian delegation (appendix D); and the theme of the report for 2018 of the High-level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition.